

“WHEN THE TAIL WAGS THE DOG”

I Corinthians 14:1-25

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. Grasping the idiom: “The generic use of the term means a small and seemingly unimportant entity (the tail) controls a bigger, more important one (the dog).”
 - 1. Spiritual gifts – the tail: *(1 Cor. 12-14)* *(See back)*
 - 2. Agape love – the dog – “the more excellent way”: *(1 Cor. 12:31-13:13)* *(See back)*
- B. Clarifying how it happens at church:
 - 1. Carnal worship *(getting)*: *(1 Cor. 3:1-4)* *(See back)*
 - 2. Spiritual worship *(giving)* – “not I but Christ”: *(See back)*
- C. Prefacing emotional experiences with the Word of God: *(Acts 17:11; 1 Jn. 4:1)*

II. “BODY BUILDING” vs. “SELF-BUILDING”:

- A. The position of the gift of tongues: *vv. 1-19*
 - 1. Reestablishing priorities:
 - 2. Defining two spiritual gifts: *(See back)*
 - 3. Three reasons for tongues being secondary:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
- B. The purpose of the gift of tongues: *vv. 20-25*
 - 1. The need to “grow up” and be interested in learning: *v. 20*
 - 2. The threefold sign: *v. 21*
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - 3. The purpose of tongues in light of a public worship service: *vv. 22-25 (Heb. 10:25)*

III. PRINCIPLES TO PERSONALLY APPLY:

(Together becoming “people of the Word” in principle AND in practice)

- A.
- B.
- C.

SINNERS PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, I was made by you and I was made for you, but I have been living for myself. I am sorry for that self-rule you call sin. I believe that Jesus Christ being my creator God, died, was buried, and rose again to pay the insurmountable debt that my sin has created since birth. So right now, I am turning from a life of going my own way, to by faith, place my trust in Jesus Christ, to pay the debt of all my sin, and to get me to heaven, when I breath my last breath. Lord Jesus, from today on, I am yours. Thanks for saving me, this very moment, in Jesus name, amen.

DEFINING TERMS

“Spiritual gifts are special abilities that allow me to function in the local body of Christ with ease and success. They are given to me at the moment of salvation by the Holy Spirit and each born again believer has at least one. Since it is an unconditional gift, it cannot be lost.” - *Dr. Charles Swindoll*

Christ-like (Gk. – “agape”, Heb. – “ahabah”) love: It is a love that can only come from God that is others centered and others satisfying. It is not as much emotional as it is factual. It has less to do with what you say, and more to do with what you do. It is an unconditional commitment to an imperfect person. It seeks the highest good for the other expecting nothing in return. It is not a feeling but a determined act of the will, (*Mt. 22:37-40; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 20:41-44*) which always results in determined acts of self-giving. (*1 Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Jn. 15:13*) Agape love is the willful, joyful choice (Heb. 12:2) to put the welfare of others above your own. Christ-like (agape) love is selfless, humble service to meet the needs of others, no matter how lowly the service or how underserving the person being served. (*Rom. 5:8; 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10; 5:3; Mt. 5:44*)

Worship – (proskuneo) – “to kiss toward” conveying the idea of showing reverent, surrendering obeisance. It is a subjective feeling of reverent humility, and respect as well as an objective activity of bowing, prioritizing, and serving in prompt obedience. It is defined simply in Isaiah 46:6b as “they fall down, yea, they worship”. It rarely in Scripture has anything to do with music evidenced by a journey through any Bible concordance. Our religious community has been enticed to redefine this Biblical term to make it less convicting and more relationally palatable to our carnal culture.

“From ‘shachah’ in the Hebrew Old Testament to ‘proskuneo’ in the Greek New Testament, worship is ALWAYS bowing physically or internally in submission to Jesus Christ. A heart that is not bowing in submission, is not worshipping.” *Ron Owen (See Gen. 18:2; Mt. 2:11; 4:9; 28:9)*

The basic elements of worship as specifically stated in Mt. 2 with the group of wise men, focus on three vital components:

1. **Bowing** to display complete submission to authority:
2. **Giving generously at the expense of getting**: gold – kingship, frankincense – fragrance of all known sin confessed, myrrh – the humbling and expensive death penalty paid for my sin debt:
3. Prompt **obedience** - wise men and then Joseph: (*Jn. 10:27*)

The spiritual gift of prophecy: (*1 Cor. 12:10, 28*) This gift defined: “The word means one who speaks forth. It was essential before the completion of the Word of God. A prophet would speak without error, a word from the Lord consistent with the written Word that had already been given, to inform, build up, reprove, and comfort.” (*See 1 Cor. 14:3*) Because it could be so readily abused, the qualifying criteria for the Jewish nation of the Old Testament (*Deut. 18:20-22; 1 Jn. 4:1*) became the basis for the criteria for the early local church era of the New Testament.”

The spiritual gift of tongues: “The Spirit-given ability to speak in utterances not otherwise known, as an exclusive sign to the unbelieving.” (*See 1 Cor. 12:28, 14:22; Isa. 28:11-12; Mk. 8:12; Jn. 4:48*)